

FORT DALLAS - BARRACKS  
MIAMI, FLORIDA.

Dade Co.

HABS No. 15-6.

HABS

FLA.

13 MIAM

1A-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
DISTRICT NO. 15.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
BERNARD W. CLOSE — DISTRICT OFFICER  
1005 BISBEE BUILDING, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

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FORT DALLAS BARRACKS  
Miami, Dade County, Florida.

Owner: D.A.R.

Date of Erection: 1836-38 (see text); 1849 (drawings).

Architect and Builder: No record.

Present Condition: Good.

Number of Stories: One.

Materials of Construction: Coral.

Other Existing Records: See text.

Additional Data: See following pages.

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## HISTORICAL DATA

### FORT DALLAS

Early history establishes the date of erection of old Fort Dallas as somewhere between 1836 and 1838. Lieutenant L. M. Powell of the United States Navy landed at the mouth of the Miami River in the summer of 1836 to reduce to submission the Seminole Indians in Florida. He built 'blockhouses' and other structures to house his troops. Whether or not Powell erected the stone buildings under survey is not definitely known.

Captain L. B. Webster of the United States Artillery arrived in February 1838 to establish a new post on the original site, which post he called Fort Dallas after Commodore Alexander James Dallas of the United States Navy. In April of the same year all troops were withdrawn, but in January 1839, Captain J. R. Vinton took over the post and was succeeded by Captain Martin Burke.

Occupation of the fort by soldiers was continuous until February 1842, when the fort was turned over to the United States Navy, and all troops again withdrawn. Another outbreak of the Seminoles caused Captain B. H. Hill to be sent to the post in 1849. He found the expected accommodations to be a two-story building

without roof and the first story walls of a long structure. This 'long structure' was no doubt the remains of the barracks building, (erroneously called a fort). The building was repaired with material purchased from New York, Savannah and Key West.

In July 1855, the United States Quartermaster reports that the first story walls of a stone structure 95' x 17' were found. To this was added a second story of wood with a porch in front, which was used as the Company's quarters, and the first story used as a storehouse.

In 1858 all troops were withdrawn. This is the last Government record of the military occupations of Fort Dallas. (The above has its authority 5: Nov. 20, 1896; see references listed below.)

Some opinion has it that those buildings erected by Lieutenant Powell in 1836 were destroyed by the Indians. At the intervals when the fort was not occupied by soldiers, all timber was removed from the building, (5: Apr. 4, 1925).

The next known occupation of the building was by one W. H. Hunt shortly before 1869. Hunt tended the property by permission of the its owner, Mrs. Harriet English. In 1870 Dr. J. V. Harris, the next owner, occupied the buildings, when in 1873 he conveyed the possession to J. N. Whitner, agent for the

Biscayne Bay Company, then owners of the property.

Whitner states that the building was subdivided into three or four large rooms at that time, but had been stripped of every particle of wood, leaving only the stone walls. He roofed the building and made habitable two rooms, (6: page 17).

Next followed a succession of agents for the Biscayne Company, including J. W. Ewan who received possession about 1878 as agent for that Company. Ewan was a political boss of this district and assisted in establishing the first county seat of Dade County in the building shortly before 1890. During this time Ewan and other County officials had offices in the structure, (1, 2 and 3).

After Julia Tuttle took over the property in 1890 as its owner, the building was used as a general storehouse and workshop, when wood sash and doors were installed. Harry Tuttle, owner in about 1910, added a front porch to the building which was then used for sleeping quarters of the adjacent Tuttle residence. Shortly afterwards the building was preserved by the City when Fort Dallas Park was established.

In 1923, when the property fell into private hands, the Tuttle residence was renovated by a social club and the fort used as sleeping quarters (3). In


1924 a modern apartment building was to be erected on the site of the old fort, and the building was torn down in sections and moved to its present site in Lummas Park a few miles away (4). For some reason a tile roof was placed on this reproduction, but was removed in 1931 and a cypress shingle roof substituted. All existing ironwork was installed by the present owners and is of no value historically.

It is not known when the two brick chimneys were added to the building. Photographs made as late as 1905 show no evidence of these chimneys having existed (3). The present division of rooms in the reproduction is not intended to be original as it is to fit the requirements of the Everglades Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the present occupants of the building.

REFERENCES AS TO AUTHORITY:

1. C. H. Perry, Miami homesteader.
2. Adam Richards, Miami homesteader.
3. Harry Tuttle, son of Julia Tuttle.
4. Year Book 1929-30, Daughters of American Revolution.
5. The Miami Daily News (formerly Miami Metropolis).
6. Certificate and Opinion of Title for the City of Miami.

"APPROVED"

  
Bernard W. Close,  
District Officer,  
Florida

*Revised 1936, H.C.F.*